
A POURING WET DAY.

JUNE 17TH, 1860.

RAIN ! endless rain ! methinks the weeping clouds
Should long ere this have deepest grief assuaged
With their fast-falling tears. Quick-footed Winds !
Drive these o'er-gloomy mourners far away,
So pitilessly selfish in their woe.
Poor shiv'ring Earth ! when will these spiteful ones
Hear her sad sighs, and cease to interpose
Between her and her love—the god of day—
Ready to woo her with his brightest smiles,
But by these marplots thwarted in his wish ?
Say, ill-used orb, who, in most gen'rous mood,
Hast often given these traitor clouds attire
Of roseate hue, superbly fringed with gold,
Canst thou fresh honours on the rebels fling ?
Wilt thou again recline thy weary head,
In summer eve, on their ungrateful breasts,
And fondly kiss them with thy ruddy lips ?
And ye, sweet, blue-eyed, even-temper'd skies,
That look so happy all the sunlit hours,
And in the night wear such a tranquil face,
When moon and stars hang up their shining lamps,
When shall we see you ? Peevish clouds, begone !

ONCE UPON A TIME.

ONLY look at Gaffer Grey
Creeping slowly on his way,
With a staff to help him stand,
Leant on with a shaking hand ;
With a step that fears to meet
The pebbles of the village street ;
With a cheek that falleth in,
And a very peaked chin ;
With a forehead made of wrinkles
Carved in crosses, cranks, and crinkles,
And a voice so thin and mumbling
That his glee might pass for grumbling.
See his eyes so bleary and dim,
And his beard so grey and grim ;
See his legs, all lean and lank,
Dwindled down to skin and shank.
Poor old Gaffer Grey is labelled
With the words that tune my rhyme :
Read him over—you'll discover
Nought but "Once upon a time."

I wander'd to a spot of earth,
Where Fame had crowned the ruin-crag,
Where ravens in their shrieking mirth
Flapp'd their black wings like conquerors' flags

Waving above a battle-field ;
 Where bat and lizard had allied,
 With mole and owlet by their side,
 And forced the bulwark foe to yield.
 Some phantasy beguiled my sight
 With vision of a gorgeous story,—
 Of jewell'd roof, of halls of light,
 Of purple woof, of walls of might,
 Of pillar'd temples, thrones of state,
 Of pomp and palace, grand and great,
 Of people's shouts, of feasting kings,
 And all the myriad dazzling things

That haunt the place of faded glory.
 —I started, for a frighten'd thrush
 Flew from a tuft of sedgy rush,
 Then, gazing down, I stepp'd aside
 To let the toad crawl back and hide ;
 A squirrel brood ran up the larch
 That sway'd within the oriel arch,
 And then my tread disturb'd the rest
 Of a wild rabbit in its nest.
 I trampled through the dank thick grass,
 To catch the bindweed's trailing flowers,
 That tied themselves in tangled mass



Across the cracking turret towers.
 The topmost battlement was lying
 Co-equal with the buttress pile ;
 And dolefully the wind was sighing
 Through festive court and priestly aisle.
 Time's robe of green was flung about
 The mammoth skeleton of strength ;
 And scatter'd bones of granite stones
 Told of its giant breadth and length.
 I stood upon a scatter'd heap
 Of fragments of the watch-tower Keep ;
 I wander'd on, and stroll'd across
 The banquet-hall, laid down with moss ;
 I climbed some steps shut out from day,
 Till dust and nettles choked my way ;
 I saw a mushroom springing up
 Where royal feet had led the dance ;

I saw the foxglove's swinging cup
 Where knights had hung their banner'd lance ;
 And as I gazed I saw a hand—
 A wither'd hand—stretch forth and write
 A short text fraught with holy thought,
 Easy to read by dullest sight.
 'Twas plain and terse, but sacred page
 Gives nought more simple and sublime,
 It soften'd youth, it solaced age,
 It mock'd the hero and the sage
 In these words—"Once upon a time."

'Twas but yesterday I found
 A score of letters, closely bound :
 Some were torn in treasured pieces,
 Some were worn in careful creases,
 Ink had faded, seals had crumbled,

And my heart felt sad and humbled ;
 For I knew the thoughts, the hopes,
 The earnest wish, the brilliant tropes
 Those letters hasten'd to reveal
 Were symbol'd by the ink and seal.
 I opened one—my pulse grew quicker,
 My eyelid fell, my breath came thicker ;
 I traced its lines, close, firm, and clear,
 Telling how deeply, fondly dear,
 The being was for whose loved sake
 That letter came, with *such* a cake.
 It gave report of Pincher's health,

It told of Muff's increase of wealth
 In five young rabbits, all milk-white,
 That Gyp and Dobbin were "all right,"
 That Midsummer would quickly come,
 And then for holidays and home.
 I gave a gasp, half sob, half sigh,
 While Memory's flood-wave filled my eye,
 And folded from my misty gaze
 My mother and my schoolgirl days.
 I look'd upon another hand,
 Bold, free, and dashing in its form ;
 And then I saw the lee-shore strand,



And heard the passion of the storm
 That tore the right arm from its hold,
 And flung it nerveless, still and cold,
 Upon the rocks, no more to send
 Its tidings full of life and joy,
 And cheer his childhood's playmate-friend
 With letters from the sailor boy.
 Another and another scroll
 I opened—one by one I read :
 I gazed as they who may unrol
 A shroud to look upon the dead.
 Love, with its ardent vows, was there,
 Friendship, that promised to be true,
 Words that like summer light and air
 Fill'd my heart's world with gold and blue.
 Where was the lover ? Where the friend ?
 The bond that was to know no end ?

Where was the promise and the vow ?
 Alas, a yawning gulf of gloom,
 Bridged only by the dark grey tomb,
 Had open'd wide 'twixt *then* and *now*.
 A muffled sound seem'd breathing round,
 A mingled tone of merry chime
 And funeral knells, but all the bells
 Gave chorus of the theme which tells
 Sad tales of "Once upon a time."

Come, I will write my epitaph
 In letters shadowy and dim,
 And though the young strong man may laugh,
 'Twill shortly serve as well for him.
 Just heap the clay where frost and sun
 May help the ivy leaf to climb,
 And all I've said, and all I've done,

And all I've lost, and all I've won,
The struggling race that I have run
Shall find full record on the stone
In these few words of solemn tone,—
“Once upon a time.”

Eliza Cook.

SHE AND I.

Now married half a score of years,
With children growing tall,
I muse on former hopes and fears,
On long past smiles and sighs and tears,
And bygone days recall.

Yes ! twelve, twelve months have passed away,
Since "She and I" first met,
But still the dress she wore that day,
And almost all she chanced to say,
I well remember yet.

Of course I cannot tell if she
Was conscious of her power ;
I know that on that day for me
Commenced a long captivity
Which lasts until this hour.

My love was faint and feeble then,
And almost self-denied ;
Yet still I'd jealous promptings when
I chanced to witness other men
Attentive at her side.

And, oh ! what jealous pangs I bore
As love increased in force ;
I often turned and left her door,
With firm resolve to go no more,—
And went next day of course.

What trifling matters then inclined
My hopes to rise or fall ;
It wasn't difficult to find
A plea for my sad state of mind
In anything at all.

While I was in this wretched state,
Some friends, one summer day,
Arranged a little rural *fête* ;
I made a sham of self-debate,
But went—I needn't say.

Although I own that in my eyes
A pic-nic's no great treat ;
I don't like gnats, or wasps, or flies,
Or dust that spreads, or damps that rise,
Or rain, or broiling heat.

Well ! at this *fête*—tho' what about
I've not discovered yet—
Clara began to sulk and pout,
And I, from sympathy, no doubt,
Began to fume and fret.

Our words were very sharp and curt,
We spoke, and nothing more ;
And then, I always will assert,
That she began to laugh and flirt
With people by the score.

(I do sometimes assert it now—
It's not a bit of use—
She positively won't allow
One single thing, but asks me how
I *can* be such a goose.)

What happen'd next I cannot say,
Except from what I hear :
I'm told that I was very gay,
And chatter'd in the wildest way
With everybody near.

The sequence of events I own
I've never understood,
But when my mind regain'd its tone,
I found that we were quite alone,
And walking in a wood.

Yes, there we were, with no one by,
No sound the silence broke,
Till Clara gave a little sigh,
Which startled me so much that I
Took heart of grace, and spoke.

I sought a smile, I fear'd a frown,
But scarce had I begun,
When she, to veil her face, shook down
Those clust'ring curls, in shadow brown,
But golden in the sun.

Ah, then came bliss, so long deferr'd,
Which paid for everything !
What joy one little whisper'd word,
So low it scarcely can be heard,
Is large enough to bring !

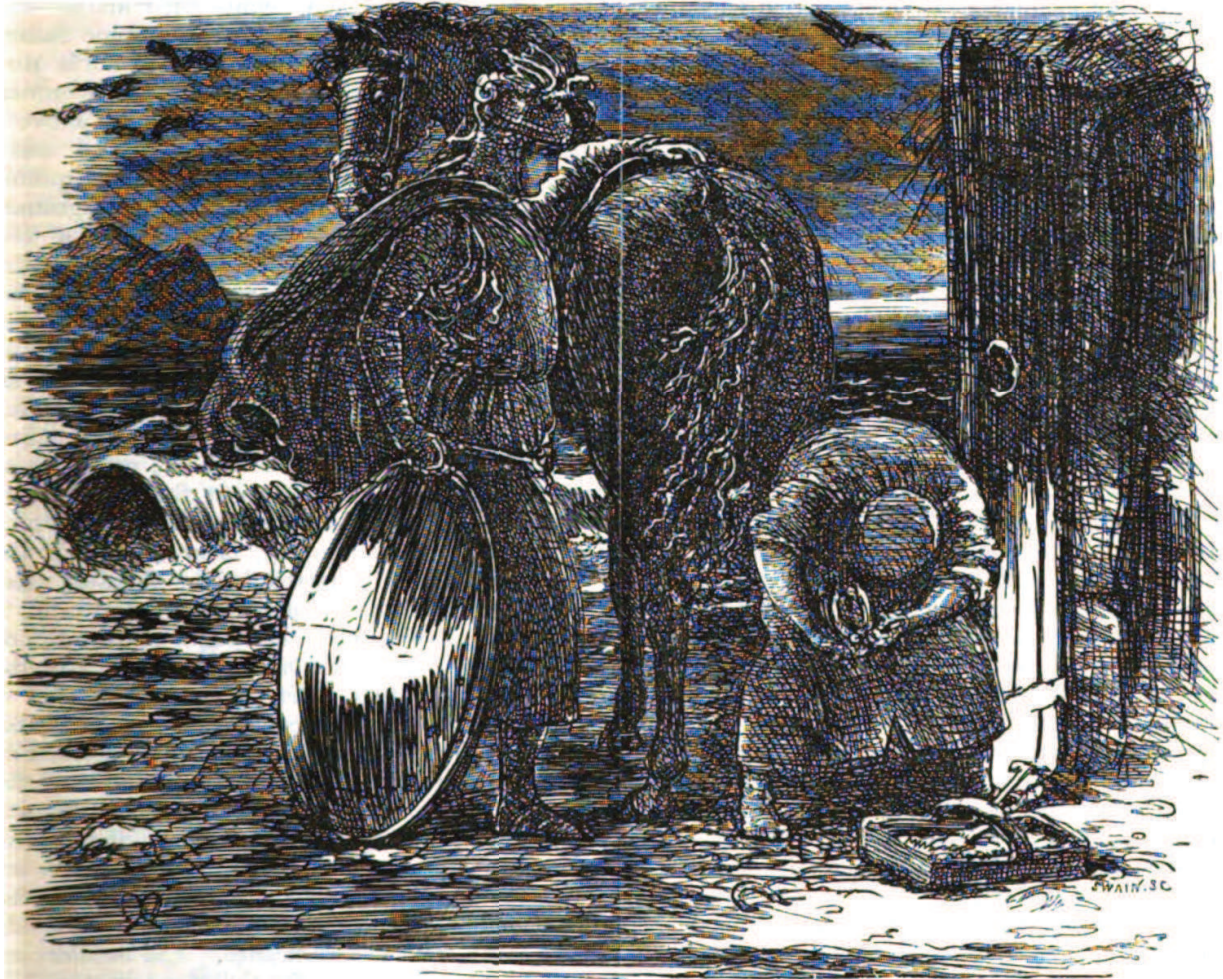
O, what a calm, delicious change
From jealousy to rest !
And then the trifles to arrange,
So numerous, so sweet, and strange,
Which give love half its zest.

The slender ring, the stolen tress,
(Inestimable prize !)
The loving glance, the shy caress :
If such as these be foolishness,
I envy not the wise.

No bitter memories remain
Of all that stormy past ;
May those who feel a kindred pain
By fortune's kindly aid attain
A kindred joy at last !

C. P. WILLIAM.

MASTER OLAF. (FROM THE GERMAN.)



MASTER OLAF, the smith of Heligoland,
At midnight layeth his hammer by ;
Along the sea-shore the tempest howls,
When a knock at the door comes heavily.

"Come out, come out, and shoe me my horse !
I must yet far, and the day is at hand !"
Master Olaf opens the door, and sees
A stately Ritter before him stand.

Black is his mail shirt, helm, and shield,
A broad sword hangeth upon his thigh,
His black horse tosses his mane so wild,
And paws the ground impatiently.

"Whence so late ! Whither so fast ?"

"I yesterday lighted in Nordernie ;
My steed is swift, the night is clear,
Ere sunrise I must in Norway be."

"Haddest thou wings, that might I believe."

"My horse with the wind right well hath raced,
Yet already a star pales here and there,
So the iron bring hither, and make thou haste."

Master Olaf taketh the shoe in hand,
It is too small, but it spread and spread :
And as it grew to the edge of the hoof,
There seized the master fear and dread.

The Ritter mounts, and his broad sword clangs :
 “ Master Olaf, I bid thee now good night !
Know, thou hast the horse of Odin shod ;
 I hasten across to the bloody fight.”

The black horse shoots forward o'er land and sea,
 Round Odin's head a splendour shone ;
Twelve eagles are straining in flight behind,
 Swiftly they fly,—he rides foremost on. L. B.

CONTRASTS.

GUESTS, at a nobleman's board,
 Drink to the bridal morrow ;
 While, at the breast of the lord
 Rankles a barb of sorrow.
 Hark to the pitiful wail !
 "That woman, my lord, without ;
 They are taking her off to the gaol."
 "Merely a beggar, no doubt."
 "What a singular sighing sound !"
 Says one of the great, at the table.
 "John, have you looked to the hound ?
 Make him a bed in the stable."

Over those steps, again,
 Entered a bride in the morn,
 Follow'd by powder'd men,
 Stiff, and stately, and shorn.
 Out of a prison den
 Issued a wretch that morn,
 Follow'd by brutal men,
 Eager to see and scorn.
 "Quick ! or we'll miss the marriage,
 Yonder, in Hanover Square.
 They are off in a splendid carriage :
 Faith, they're a splendid pair !"



A birth in a chamber great ;
 A birth in a hospital ward :
 One in sorrow ; one in state ;
 Both the sons of a lord.
 Doctors around her bed ;
 Nurses and friends beside.
 Lightly and softly tread—
 This is a titled bride.
 Cover *that* face in a shroud :
 Mention her name no more ;
 Though she was silent and proud,
 She was plebeian and poor.

The charity brat she bore,
 Yes ! let him grow up in the crowd,
 Cringe at the nobleman's door.
 Cover her face with the shroud :
 Mention her name no more !
 Send the young heir to college,
 To swim with the wealthy tide ;
 Probing the depths of knowledge,
 Skimming the shoals of pride.
 It may be his natural brother
 Will hold his horse for a crust ;
 And neither can tell the other
 Their kinship in common dust.

J. F. F.

AT NIGHT.



At Night.

“Dying! You do but jest
You smile in the dark, I know!
Surely I should know best
How the quick pulses go.
Lay your hand on my cheek:
Feel, though you see not, the red.
Why, in another week,
I shall have left my bed!

“It was being so long alone—
So sick of the world's vain strife,
Uncared for, and unknown,
That sapp'd the springs of life!
You have given a world of love:
Nay, soften that anxious brow;
Is not our God above?
He will not summon me now.

“The summer is coming fast;
I can scent the rich perfume
Of the lilac by the door,
And the delicate apple-bloom.
Where shall our year be spent?
I long for the hills of Spain—
We will go to Rome, for Lent,
Then back to our home again.

“O, what is this sudden pang?
Is it growing darker, Will?
Heavily goes my heart, —
It is almost standing still!
Raise me—I cannot breathe-
Pray for me, love,” she said.
“Father, into *Thy* hands!”
And my young wife was dead.

THE GAME OF LIFE.

With eager hand Hope deftly weaves
The mantles that our pride would don,
While busy-finger'd Care unreaves
The garments as we put them on.
We rear our palaces of joy,
And tread them with exulting shout,
Till, crumbling round, 'tis plainly found
Some corner-stones have been left out.
And thus we play the game of Life,
Shadow and substance ever blending ;
'Mid flowers of Peace and tares of Strife
Gaily beginning, sadly ending.

The maiden greets her swain to-day,
They jar to-morrow, and she flouts him ;
Now she believes whate'er he'll say,
A month has gone,—alas ! she doubts him ;
The lover hangs upon a glance,
With glowing trust and earnest suing ;
Next year he rouses from his trance,
And scorns the one he late was wooing.
And thus we play the game of Life,
Our dreams dispell'd, our plans defeated,
And when we've lost with pain and cost,
Still stand, as ready to be cheated.

The cooing infant's rosy mouth
Aptly receives the sweeten'd potion ;
When waves are calm, and winds are south,
None see the death-rocks in the ocean.
The rich man toils to "gather up,"
Meaning to bask in Fortune's clover,
And while he pours into his cup,
Perceives not it is running over.
And thus we play the game of Life,
Now simply snared, now wisely brooding,
Now bribed by smiles, now spreading wiles,
Living deluded and deluding.

The Poet prattles to the stars,
Philosophers dissect the thunder,
But both are stepp'd by crystal bars,
And stand outside to watch and wonder.
We moralise on battle-plains,
Where blood has poured, and fame was won,
We turn and see the baby's glee
Over his mimic sword and gun.
And thus we play the game of Life,
'Twixt holy Thought and fearful Deed.
Some only stay to work and pray,
And some but live for Crime and Greed.

Our feet of clay trip up each other,
Our wings of ether seek the sky ;
We breathe—we are—child follows mother,
Yet none can tell us "How?" or "Why?"
Our hearts, like clocks, keep ticking fast,
We climb and laugh, we fall and weep,
Till, tired of guessing, at the last
We solve the riddle in a sleep.
And thus we play the game of Life,
In motley garbs of Grief and Pleasure,
Till we are drest in that green vest
For which the sexton takes our measure.

ELIZA COOK.

VIOLET.

SHE stood where I had used to wait
For her, beneath the gaunt old yew,
And near a column of the gate
That open'd on the avenue.

The moss that capp'd its granite ball,
The grey and yellow lichen stains,
The ivy on the old park wall,
Were glossy with the morning rains.

She stood, amid such tearful gloom ;
But close behind her, out of reach,
Lay many a mound of orchard bloom,
And trellis'd blossoms of the peach.

Those peaches blooming to the south,
Those orchard blossoms, seem'd to me
Like kisses of her rosy mouth,
Revived on trellis and on tree :

Kisses, that die not when the thrill
Of joy that answer'd them is mute ;
But such as turn to use, and fill
The summer of our days with fruit.

And she, impressing half the sole
Of one small foot against the ground,
Stood resting on the yew-tree bole,
A-tiptoe to each sylvan sound :

She, whom I thought so still and shy,
Express'd in every subtle move
Of lifted hand and open eye
The large expectancy of love ;

Until, with all her dewy hair
Dissolved into a golden flame
Of sunshine on the sunless air,
She came to meet me as I came.

But in her face no sunlight shone ;
No sunlight, but the sad unrest
Of shade, that sinks from zone to zone
When twilight glimmers in the west.

What grief had touch'd her on the nerve ?
For grief alone it is, that stirs
The full ineffable reserve
Of quiet spirits such as hers :

'Twas this—that we had met to part ;
That I was going, and that she
Had nothing left but her true heart,
Made strong by memories of me.

What wonder then, she quite forgot
Her old repression and control,
And loosed at once and stinted not
The tender tumult of her soul !

What wonder, that she droop'd and lay
In silence, and at length in tears,
On that which should have been the stay
And comfort of her matron years !



But from her bosom, as she leant,
She took a nested violet,
And gave it me—"because 'twas meant
For those who never can forget."

This is the flower : 'tis dry, or wet
With something I may call my own.
Why did I rouse this old regret ?
It irks me, now, to be alone :

Triumphs, indeed ! Why, after all,
My life has but a leaden hue :
My heart grows like the heart of Saul,
For hatred, and for madness too.

Why sits that smirking minstrel there ?
I hate him, and the songs he sings ;
They only bring the fond despair
Of inaccessible sweet things :

I will avoid him once for all,
Or slay him in my righteous ire—
Alas, my javelin hits the wall,
And spares the minstrel and his lyre !

Yea, and the crown upon my head,
The crown of wealth for which I strove,
Shall fall away ere I be dead
To yon slight boy who sings of love !

Why are we captive, such as I,
Mature in age and strong of will,
To one who harps so plaintively ?
I struck at him—why lives he still ?

Why lives he still ? Because the ruth
Of those pure days may never die :
He lives, because his name is Youth ;
Because his harp is—Memory.

ARTHUR J. MUNBY.

THE BETRAYED.

SHE sat alone, on a cold grey stone,
Where the river made a desolate moan.

The sycamore trees stood white and bare,
Like sheeted ghosts in the dusky air.

A black cloud floated along the sky,
And a night-bird utter'd a dismal cry.

Sadly she thought of the innocent time,
Wildly she wept for her shame and crime.

Darker and deeper the shadows grow :
He promised to meet her an hour ago.

She sat alone, on the cold grey stone,
And the river flow'd with a sadder moan.

She heard the hum of the distant town,
The patter of dead leaves falling down.

She heard the toad in the long dank grass,
But never *his* tread,—alas, alas!

The morning came with its golden light,
To the sycamore trees so bare and white.



The mists that slept on the river's brim
Went up like the wings of the cherubim.

The water-lilies so cold and fair
Were tangled with tresses of bright brown hair.

The osiers bent with a quiet grace
Over a form with a still, white face.

The river flow'd with a desolate moan,
And dead leaves fell on the cold grey stone.

SARAH T. BOLTON.

I'VE LOST MY HEART.

WHERE *is* my heart ? Alas ! not here.
It wander'd from my careful keeping,
And "stole away " one summer's eve
When I was too securely sleeping.

I called it back. Ah, truant heart,
It would not heed the timely warning,
But vow'd, with many a blush and smile,
It would return before the morning.

The morning came ; but not my heart ;
I've never seen the wanderer since,
And can't forgive the faithless elf
For keeping me in such suspense.

I've lost my heart. What must be done ?
'Tis plain I cannot live without it ;
Perchance, some day it may return,
If I don't say too much about it.

For hearts, I know, are so perverse,
That if they think you prize them highly,
They give themselves conceited airs,
And very often treat you vilely.

And so I'll try to bear my loss,
My wounded feelings I must smother,
I may, perhaps, repair my loss,
And some day find myself another.
Will no one volunteer a loan
Until I can get back my own ?

The heart I've lost is warm and light,
And has a trick of loving blindly,
If you should find the wayward sprite,
I hope you'll treat it very kindly.

Should you neglect it, 'twill rebel,
And surely die if you are cruel ;
But if you understand it well,
You'll find this heart a priceless jewel.

So if it chance to come your way,
Don't keep it there at any cost,
Unless you'll use it tenderly,
But send me back the heart I've lost !

JESSICA RANKIN.

DARK GORDON'S BRIDE.



Young Helen has heard the fatal order,
Her English lover must banish'd be,
For Gordon, Chief on the Scottish border,
Comes hither to bend the wooer's knee.

She wildly vows to the heavens above her
She'll wed young Nevill, whate'er betide ;
But her father has banish'd her landless lover,
And the haughty chieftain claims his bride.

In after days they have met : far better
That parted lovers should meet no more,
When *one* is bound by that golden fetter,
With the love still warm at each true heart's core.

So sadly he touch'd her lily finger,
Weeping she look'd on her ring of gold :
Ah, fatal thus by his side to linger !
Fatal to sigh for the days of old !

"I saw thee kneeling before the altar,
My haughty rival was by thy side,
But I could not hear thy dear voice falter
When vowing to be his *faithful* bride !"

"What, Nevill ! can'st thou be cruel-hearted ?
A father's blessing I could not win,
Unless we two for aye were parted, —
But, O, I have wept for that deadly sin !

“Vowing to *honour*, I *scorned* and *hated*,
Dreaming on all I had loved and lost,
But, ah ! more bitter, more darkly fated,
That ever again our paths have cross'd !”

She felt the clasp of his hand so tender,
One kiss he press'd on her cheek so fair,—
Hark to that curse ! May heaven defend her !
Dark Gordon is standing before the pair !

Proudly he lifted his Scottish bonnet,
O, but his smile was dark to see :
“What ho ! Sir Nevill, my life upon it,
Thou comest to win my bride from me !”

Now foot to foot, as the sun was sinking,
Both lover and husband frowning stood,
The fiery chieftain's blade is drinking
The brave young Nevill's knightly blood.

She tore the ring from her lily finger,
With, “Nevill, beloved, I come to thee !
In the Gordon's halls no more I linger
If this weak hand can set me free !”

She pluck'd the dirk from her bleeding lover,
She buried it deep in her breast so white,—
With, “Nevill, beloved, our woes are over !—
To the Gordon's thrall a glad good-night !”

The chief look'd down on the hapless lovers ;—
O, but his frown was dark to see :
“I would give the best of my lands, proud Nevill,
To hold the heart thou hast lured from me !”

He knelt him down as her life was ebbing,
On the trampled heather he bent the knee ;
“I would pluck the heart from my breast, false Ellen,
For one soft smile of love from thee !”

B. S. MONTGOMERY.

JOLLY ANGLERS.

FOUR of us went out fishing,
Mary, Fairy, I, and the man :
No use in grumble or wishing,
People may catch who can.

Mary was lucky that morning,
Lucky almost, I think, as the man,
And she laughed with her saucy scorning
As the fishes they filled her can.

The man was lucky in hooking :
Off the perch with his trimmers ran,
And he caught us a dish worth cooking,
As your Maidenhead fisherman can.

I caught nothing worth keeping,
Things about the length of a span ;
When a gentleman's heart is leaping
He may strike a fish, if he can.

But Fairy, she made a capture,
On her darling own original plan,
And Fairy's eyes looked rapture
As her great soft violets can.

With a single line she made it,
O, such a line you'd have liked to scan !
One line, and the lady laid it
Where loving young ladies can.

In a gentleman's hand she placed it
Before our Maidenhead fishing began,
How his chances of fish were wasted,
Tell, lovers—who only can.

Over-night an enraptured dancer
Had handed a passionate note in a fan,
And the line was this gracious answer—
“ You may love me—if you can.”

THE MEETING.



THE old coach-road thro' a common of furze
With knolls of pines, ran white :
Berries of autumn, with thistles, and burrs,
And spider-threads, droopt in the light.

The light in a thin blue veil peer'd sick ;
The sheep grazed close and still ;
The smoke of a farm by a yellow rick
Curl'd lazily under a hill.

No fly shook the round of the silver net ;
No insect the swift bird chased ;

Only two travellers moved and met
Across that hazy waste.

One was a girl with a babe that throve,
Her ruin and her bliss ;
One was a youth with a lawless love,
Who claspt it the more for this.

The girl for her babe made prayerful speech ;
The youth for his love did pray ;
Each cast a wistful look on each,
And either went their way.

G. M.

ELFIE MEADOWS.

A sunny day in leafy June, white clouds are floating
high,
Leisurely through the blue expanse, and bees hum
drowsily ;
In shady nooks the cattle herd, and ruminating
doze,
While onward, with a rippling song, the glancing river
flows.

With fairy steps a maiden stroll'd along the rushy
bank,
Her light foot hardly seem'd to crush the daisies where
it sank.
The dragon-flies unheeding brush her soft curls as they
pass ;
The wary lizard boldly peeps from 'neath his tuft of
grass.

Beneath her hat of plaited straw her eyes shine soft and
blue,
Her tender, quivering mouth tells tales of feeling deep
and true :
O Elfie Meadows !—scarce eighteen—how many a heart
has beat
To kiss the flow'ret in your hand, the daisies 'neath
your feet !

Yet scorn can dwell in those sweet eyes, cold words
those lips can speak ;
For many, though you're scarce eighteen, to gain your
love would seek.
You wave them off with calm disdain. Have you no
heart to give ?
Or is it in yourself alone, and for yourself, you live ?

Not so, sweet Elsie : next your heart a tiny pledge you
wear,—
Within a case of purest gold a lock of raven hair ;
And ever and anon you take, and to your lips you
press,
This token of unfailing love to cheer your loneliness.

"And if," I ask, "long years should pass, and he
should not return,
This tribute of a fleeting love you scornfully would spurn ?"
"Never," she says, with flashing eyes ; "time matters
not to love ;
And ours is true,—it springs below, but rears its fruit
above."

"Ah, Elsie, but you little know how absence can
estrangle,—
How fondest hearts at last find out 'tis possible to change."
She stamp'd her little foot at me. "I tell you 'tis not so
With love that bears its flowers aloft, and has its roots
below."



"Others have said the same," quoth I, "who loved as
well as you,
Yet ten or twenty years have served to prove their love
untrue."
Her small white hands she tightly clasp'd, and said,
with face a-glow,
"Their love no fruit could bear on high—it had no
root below."

"And yours, my Elsie," murmured I, "how can you
test its truth,—
It may be that maturer years will scorn the love of
youth ?"
"Nay, try me not too hard," she said, "I only know
I love,
And love that has such root below is perfected above."

We two sat on a mossy bank, her soft eyes look'd
before
Into the river's crystal depths ; fain would I test her
more ;
But one she little wist was near, had secretly o'erheard
Words that his inmost heart had touch'd, his deepest
pulses stirr'd.

"And what," he ask'd, in quivering tones, "if some
friend true and tried
Had told you that your faithless Guy had found another
bride ?"
Around his neck she wildly flung her arms with joyous
glee :
"Ah, never, Guy, would I believe you could be false
to me !"
T.

FIRST LOVE.



SHE was the first, the only star
That shone upon my life,
The summer of my days had set
Before I called her wife ;
The leaves have fallen twenty times
Beneath our trysting tree,
Since the ringers shook the rafters
In the belfry by the sea.

The pulses of my heart beat slow,
With calm, unflutter'd stroke,
Till with a party from the Grange
I pic-nic'd at the Oak ;
A stranger to our Forest ways,
She came with Alan's bride,
One glance—I knew my love was come—
The old indifference died.

The park, a summer's walk across,
Was famous in the shire ;
The porter at the crested gates
Grew rich and blessed the Squire ;
I show'd the glade where ballads say
The King met Robin Hood,
I took her where, as boys, we cropp'd
Wild strawberries in the wood.

The gardens and the orange-trees,
The swans upon the lake,
The gazing stags among the fern,
The pheasants in the brake :
These sumptuous signs of wealthy state
She saw with sweet surprise,
And I——new light was on them all,
Seen with a lover's eyes.

When Alan blew his warning horn,
My chestnut join'd her bay ;
Down the long grassy "rides" we rode,
And watch'd the rabbits play.
The dead sun in his crimson shroud
Lay buried in the west,
And Love was nestling in my heart,
An inmate, not a guest.

A gipsy party gaily plann'd,
A smile, a soft "good night,"
And then I left the low white house,
Just as the stars were bright :—
Lost in some far, forgotten sea,
The sailor on the shore
Sights, to his joy, the ship that comes
To bear him home once more.

The bride moon with her dower of stars
Twice grew to matron age,
Before my birdie flew away
Back to her northern cage ;
She knew the abbey pictures well,
She dared the haunted room,
We laughed around the Oak again,
And saw the aloe bloom.

A promise in the oriel won
To crown my growing bliss,
A drooping head, a circled waist,
And such a binding kiss !
O, happy time ! O, happy time !
It never has its fellow,—
The one green leaf that hangs among
So many sere and yellow.

Before the Autumn spent his wrath
Upon the Rectory vine,
I claim'd the promise that she made,
I went and whisper'd, "mine :"
May's father trembled as he said,
"Take her, a trusting wife,
And cherish one whose love has thrown
A glory round my life."

Some days beside a lonely mere,
(Lured by the waterfall),
And then we settled at the Grange,
For Alan took the Hall :
How swift the lustres pass'd along,
Sweet heart, with love and you,
For if the sky was sometimes dark,
There came a break of blue.

And ever, as the year winds round,
And brings the longest day,
We gather at the Forest Oak,
Where first I met my May ;
Look, Alan's boy and our maybud
Are coming down the "ride,"
Perhaps before another June
There 'll be another bride.

R. F. SKETCHLEY.

SEPTEMBER.

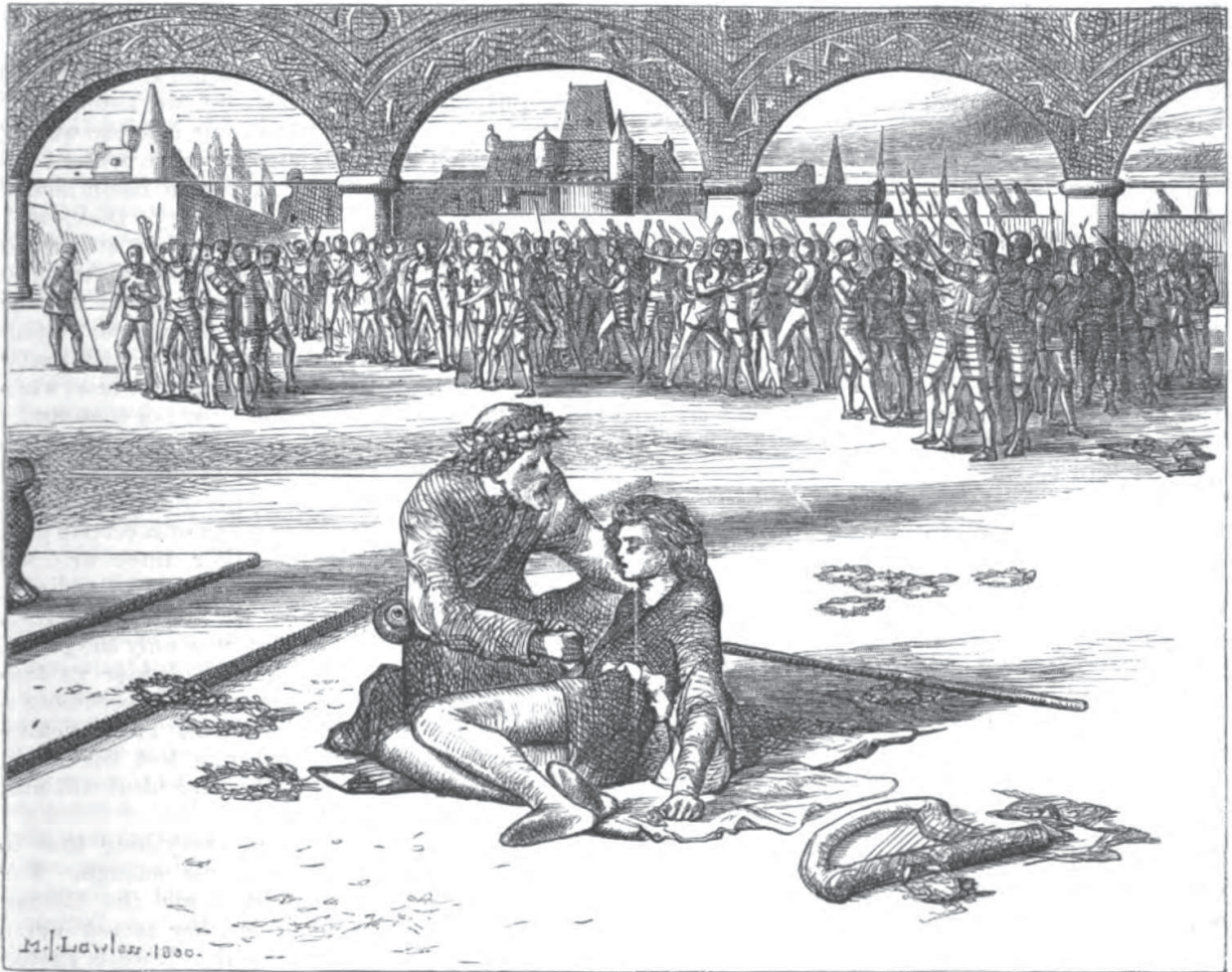
THE harvest moon stands on the sea,
Her golden rim's adrip ;
She lights the sheaves on many a lea,
The sails on many a ship ;
Glitter, sweet Queen, upon the spray,
And glimmer on the heather ;
Right fair thy ray to gild the way
Where lovers walk together.

The red wheat rustles, and the vines
Are purple to the foot,
And true-love, waiting patient, wins
Its blessed time of fruit :
Lamp of all lovers, Lady-moon,
Light these ripe lips together
Which reap alone a harvest sown
Long ere September weather.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

THE MINSTREL'S CURSE.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.)



In days of old a castle stood high and proud to view,
Over the landscape shining, far as the ocean blue,
Wreath'd all around with gardens, where 'mid the
fragrant flowers,
The air was cool'd by fountains, sparkling in rainbow
showers.

There sat a haughty monarch, in lands and conquests
great,
Upon his throne, wan-visaged, he sat in sullen state ;
His thoughts are all of horrors, his eyes are bright with
rage ;
His words they fall like scourges ; he writes, blood
stains the page.

Once came there to his castle a noble minstrel pair,
The locks of one were golden—silver the other's hair ;
With harp the old man journey'd, a stately horse
astride,
His blooming comrade gaily walk'd by the horse's side.

The old bespoke the younger : "Prepare, my son,
make choice
Of all our songs the deepest—attune thy fullest voice—
Exert thy utmost power—of joy and sorrow sing :
Our aim must be to waken the hard heart of the king."

Within the Hall of Columns now the two minstrels
stand,
Upon his throne the monarch, his queen at his right
hand ;
The king all dread and stately—a blood red Northern
Light,
The queen all sweet and gentle—a full moon shining
bright.

The greybeard struck the harp-strings, he struck them
wondrous well,
Upon the ear they sounded with rich and richer
swell ;
Then came the youth's voice gushing—so heav'nly clear
it rang,
And, like a spirit chorus, between the old man sang.

They sang of love and spring-time, of happy golden
days,
Of truth and manly honour—they sang in freedom's
praise—
They sang of all things lofty, they sang of all things
sweet,
That make men's bosoms quiver, that make men's
hearts to beat.

Around, their sports forgetting, gather'd the courtier
crowd :

The haughty warriors, humbled, before their Maker
bow'd ;

The queen herself was melted by tales of joys and
woes,

And threw down to the singers, pluck'd from her
breast, a rose.

"My folk you have enchanted : charm you my wife to
boot ?"

The monarch cried, with fury he shook from head to
foot,

Then hurl'd his sword, that, flashing, the young man's
bosom tore,

Whence, 'stead of golden music, issued a stream of gore.

The list'ners all were scatter'd (as when a storm alarms),
The youth breathed out his spirit, clasp'd in his master's
arms ;

The corpse within his mantle he wrapp'd, and bound it
fast

Upright upon his palfrey, and from the castle pass'd.

Before the lofty portals the grey-hair'd minstrel stands,
His harp, of harps the treasure, he seizes in his
hands,

And 'gainst a marble column he casts it with a cry
Through castle and through gardens that echoes awfully :

"Woe to you, halls so haughty ! Never let music-
strain

Re-echo through thy vaultings, nor harp nor song,
again !

Let sighs and groanings only for ever bear the sway,
Until th' avenging angel has crush'd you in decay !

"Woe to you, fragrant gardens, in golden light of May,
This dead man's face disfigured I show to you this day :
That you at it may wither, that every well may dry,
That you from hence for ever a stony waste may lie !

"Woe to you, curs'd assassin ! of minstrelsy the bane !
Be all thy blood-stain'd struggles for glory's wreath in
vain !

Thy name be it forgotten in night without an end,
And like a last death-rattle with empty vapour blend !"

The minstrel old had spoken, and heaven had heard his
cry ;

The halls are all in ruins, the walls all prostrate lie ;

Witness of pride long vanish'd still stands one column
tall,

And this, already shatter'd, to-night to earth may fall.

Instead of fragrant gardens, a desert heather-land !

No tree gives shade, no fountain comes welling through
the sand :

No songs, no hero-stories, the monarch's name re-
hearse,

For ever lost, forgotten !—Such is the Minstrel's Curse !

FARISTAN AND FATIMA.

AN ORIENTAL LEGEND.

DONE INTO HIS MOTHER-TONGUE BY E. A. BOWRING.

PART I.

ONCE in a famous Eastern city,
There lived a tailor with a pretty,
In fact a very pretty wife,
Whom he loved better than his life.
Her eyes were of the blackest sort,
No lily's stem was half so slender,
Of finest silk her hair seem'd wrought,
Her rosy cheeks were smooth and tender,
Her age scarce twenty,—and, in short,
It was impossible to mend her.
One day quoth he : “ You darling little wife, you !
Whatever would become of hapless me,
If I should happen to survive you,
And your fair body I should see
Lying a corpse, all cold and void of motion,
Within my arms ? The very notion
Gives me a chill as if I now were dying !
I swear that if I, wretched man,
Only survive the shock, you'll find me lying
Upon your tomb for nine long days, and crying,
Crying the very best I can ! ”—

“ And if, dear husband,” she began,
I'm the survivor when we're parted,
I'll buried be, my Faristan,
Inside your coffin, broken-hearted.”—

"A noble woman!" he with rapture thought,
As in his arms his wife he caught.
He felt no doubt about it, for, you know,
She said it,—so it must be so!

About a year had pass'd away
Since the agreement made that day,
When it so chanc'd that, as they sat
Over their evening meal of curry,
Spending the time in pleasant chat,
Poor Fatima, in too great hurry
To eat some tit-bit, while her eyes
Ogled, in manner far from wise,
Her husband, not her plate, by ill-luck swallow'd
A little bone—of course you guess what follow'd.

What could be done? Poor Faristan
Skips here and there, does all he can,
Upon the back he thumps her,
He shakes her, bumps her, jumps her,
He tries to push it down, he upwards tries to pull it,—
In vain! She's choked by that small bone inside
her little gullet!

Only imagine his despair!
Soon in her winding-sheet they fold her,
Black in the face, it may be, yet so fair!
He could not summon courage to behold her.

Now Fatima is in her grave,
And Faristan begins to rave,
And rolls upon it, sighing with such ardour,
That he is heard a mile away and more,
Fully resolved (so much did he regard her)
Nine days to stop there, as we know he swore.

The Prophet chanced to pass that way,
Found it impossible to pray
In such a noise, so asked politely :—
"What mean these groans and writhings so un-
sightly?"

"O, sir!" said he, "within this tomb there lies
The best of wives,—I never knew a chaster
Or nobler woman, loving, young, and wise,—
And in the grave this very day I've placed her."

The Prophet answer'd: "Since you for her sake
Are grieving so, and merit to be lucky,
I'll grant your wish," and as he spake,
The staff his hand was grasping struck he
Upon the tomb, and, lo! it open'd wide,
And Fatima appear'd outside
In health and beauty, and with rapturous passion
Rush'd to her husband's arms in loving fashion.
How they embraced and hugg'd each other!
Any spectator must have thought
Such kisses were enough to smother
Both man and wife.—And next they sought
To thank the Prophet for this miracle portentous,
But couldn't—he was *non inventus*!

PART II.

Good Faristan bethought him then
That Fatima's loose funeral linen raiment
(Although 'twas dusk) for walking home again
Was scarcely, in the usual way, meant.
"Light of my eyes! behind these stones stoop down,
While I run home and fetch your shoes and gown;
The moon is up, there's little danger in it,
Fear not, and I'll be back in half a minute."

He spoke, and vanish'd like a shot.—
Meanwhile there happen'd to approach the spot
The Sultan's son, escorted by the light
Of many torches through the night.

His servants, by the flickering glare,
Perceived a woman with dishevell'd hair,
And scanty clothing, seeking to conceal
Her somewhat striking dishabille,
Which in the darkness, by the torchlight aided,
Seem'd greater than it in the day did.

The Sultan's son his march suspended,
And then approach'd her unattended,
While she with arms and hands was trying
Her want of clothing to replace,
And left exposed, in beauty vying,
Two legs and feet of matchless grace.

The Prince, instead of putting (as his duty
Clearly enjoin'd) his hands before his face,
With might and main stood staring at the beauty—
"What loveliness is this I trace !
And yet the time, spot, dress, are rather funny—"
"My lord !" she said in accents sweet as honey,
"I feel so awkward in this negligée,
I really know not what to say !"

The Prince at once confess'd the force
Of her remark, and then of course
Gave her his own great coat at this suggestion,
And said, "Fair lady, just one question !



Pray, are you married ? If you single are,
Come home with me, and be the brightest
star

Within my harem ! Be a prince's bride,
I love you more than all the world beside !"

Fair Fatima soon comprehended
Th' advantage of this offer splendid,
And found her knowledge as a tailor
In measuring its extent avail her.
Alas ! when this proposal made he,
I grieve to say the naughty lady
Forgot her duty and her plighted troth,
Forgot her husband and her oath.
"My lord ! I'm single, and quite ready
To offer you allegiance steady,
And live but for Your Royal Highness !"
"A bargain !" he exclaim'd with slyness ;—
A horse is brought, and, lighted by the
torches,
Soon Fatima's inside his harem's porches.

Scarce had she gone, when Faristan comes back,
Bringing the clothes she seem'd to lack.
She is not there ! His wonderment immense is ;
He shouted, search'd, and well-nigh lost his senses.
"She is some robber's prize," then thought he,—
In this we scarce can contradict him ;
He little dreamt that she could be so naughty,
As to have been a willing victim !

"Why didn't I escort her home at once,
Dress'd as she was ? Alas, poor silly dunce !
In what distress my darling little wife
Will be ! She said that she should find her life
So sad without me, that she needs must be
Buried alive in the same grave with me.
You phoenix of a woman ! if a stranger
Has dared to pester you with his advances,
I'm sure that you'll have saved yourself from danger,
As any noble matron would,— the chance is
That you have scratch'd your face, or torn your hair,
Or even stabb'd yourself in your despair !"

Alas, poor Faristan deluded,
She felt more happy far than you did !
She liked her quarters in the harem so,
That she had not the slightest wish to go,
And took so kindly to her new position,
She quite forgot you and your sad condition.

PART III.

Poor Faristan begins to seek her

Early and late, through all the country round,
But all in vain ; his hopes grow weaker,
No trace of her can anywhere be found.
He also searches for his friend the Prophet,
Hoping that he could tell him something of it.—

At length a person who was present
At the adventure, brought the news un-
pleasant
That Fatima, the good and tender,
Instead of swearing "No surrender !"
Had shown the Prince a preference decided,
And in his harem happily resided.

Our hero now no longer waits,
But hastens to the palace gates,
Past all the servants, heralds, courtiers
pushes,
Into the Prince's very presence rushes,
And there begins he to implore him
His faithful lost one to restore him.



The Prince, kind man (who maybe had enough
Of Fatima ere this), gave no rebuff,
But told him what had pass'd, without conceal-
ment,
On learning what this strong appeal meant.
"She doubtless was beside herself with terror,"
Said Faristan, "and thought that you were
me ;
O let her come, and I'll explain her error,—
My own dear wife ! You presently shall see,
My gracious lord, with how much fervour
She'll rush to kiss me—heaven preserve her !"

" 'Tis well !" the Prince replied, "so be it !
I'll at a distance stand to see it."

The lady came—good Faristan
Was so much dazzled by the splendour
Of her gold clothes and jewels, that, poor man,
He knew her scarce, and felt like some pretender.
But Fatima in half a second
Knew him too well, stepp'd back, turn'd deadly
white,
Then fiery red ; but soon she reckon'd
With woman's wit the way to win the fight.

Now, when the Prince observed her start, he
Rush'd up and said, "You know this party?"

"O yes!" replied the gentlest of all creatures,
I recognise too well his features.
This is the robber who attack'd me,
Beat me, and dragg'd me to the spot from whence
Your Highness had the goodness to extract me,
Half-naked, thanks to his impertinence!"

On hearing his dear wife thus speak,
Poor Faristan turns pale as death,
Stares wildly round, feels faint and weak,
His senses swim, he gasps for breath.
The Court in chorus all asserted
Such conduct proved a mind perverted;
His guilt was clear, the Prince commanded
That they should take him to the Cadi.
Into the judgment-room he's banded,
The case is tried, the gentle lady
Duly deposes, our poor friend
Makes no defence, what cares he for his life,
Seeing this conduct of his faithless wife?
He'd rather have it at an end.
The verdict's "Guilty!" so they take him straight-
way
Off to the gallows near the city's gateway.

What could have saved his neck and reputation,
As he stood trembling at the gallows' base,
Had not the Prophet (who in our narration
Has play'd a part) approach'd the place?
His figure glisten'd with an angel's splendour.
"This man is innocent, and no offender,
And I'm his witness too!" he cried aloud.
The hangman dropp'd the rope, the crowd
Stared when they heard this speech of one
Who never spoke in ignorance or malice,
And all together hasten'd to the palace;
The Sultan came, attended by his son.
The Prophet, highly honour'd at the Court,
First says his say; then Fatima is brought.
Around them both, the others form a ring;
Too conscious of her guilt, the naughty thing
Lifts up her eyes, the Prophet recognises,
Falls down a corpse, while great the crowd's sur-
prise is.

Good Faristan gets ample compensation,
While Fatima's consign'd to her old tomb;
There she may stop until the day of doom.
He hasn't now the slightest inclination
To throw himself, and weep, and rave
E'en for nine seconds on her grave.

A SCORE OF YEARS AGO.

Down by the breaking waves we stood,
 Upon the rocky shore ;
 The brave waves whisper'd courage,
 And hid with friendly roar
 The falt'ring words that told the tale
 I dared not tell before.

I ask'd, if with the priceless gift,
 Her love, my life she'd bless ?
 Was it her voice, or some fair wave,—

For, sooth, I scarce may guess,—
 Some murmuring wave, or her sweet voice,
 That lis'd so sweetly "Yes."

And then, in happy silence, too,
 I clasp'd her fair wee hand ;
 And long we stood there, carelessly,
 While o'er the darkening land
 The sun set, and the fishing-boats
 Were sailing from the strand.



It seems not many days ago—
 Like yesterday,—no more,
 Since thus we stood, my love and I,
 Upon the rocky shore ;
 But I was four-and-twenty *then*,
 And *now* I'm forty-four.

The lily hand is thinner now,
 And in her sunny hair
 I see some silvery lines, and on
 Her brow some lines of care ;
 But, wrinkled brow, or silver locks,
 She's not one whit less fair.

The fishing-boats a score of years
 Go sailing from the strand ;
 The crimson sun a score of years
 Sets o'er the darkening land ;
 And here to-night upon the cliff
 We're standing hand-in-hand.

"My darling, there's our eldest girl,
 Down on the rocks below ;
 What's Stanley doing by her side ?"
 My wife says, "You should know :
 He's telling her what you told me
 A score of years ago." W. L. W.

AIMLESS.

AIMLESS to float upon the tide of life,
Aimless, and therefore hopeless—saddest fate
That man can ever know—with danger rife,
Black danger to the soul's eternal state.

Better to have creation's meanest thing
On which to lavish thought and energy,
Than, bounding wishes in one daily ring,
Content oneself to eat, and sleep, and be.

And yet, when darkness brooding o'er my soul,
Hides the fair mountain tops where I would climb ;
When from earth's valley chilly mists uproll,
And my tried land-marks vanish in the rime ;

Then, I could almost wish myself a clod,
Who lived because he lived—some happy fool,
Like sheep who crops from day to day the sod,
Or lazy fly upon a stagnant pool,

So I might only be at rest—at rest—
Nor blind mine eyes with looking at the light,
Nor, struggling for the highest and the best,
Fall from the summit of an Alpine height
To the deep chasm of a starless night !

ANNA HAGEDON.

JEANNIE.

WHERE's the way to Jeannie's house ?
Any child will guide you ;
Or ye may find the road yoursel',
The river runs beside you.

Where's the way to Jeannie's heart ?
That I canna answer :
Hereabout or thereabout,
Find it if you can, sir.

Is this the way to Jeannie's house ?
As straight as you can go, sir ;

Down the valley, through the wood,
And by the brook below, sir.

What's the way to Jeannie's heart ?
That I canna say, sir ;
A lang way up, a wee way down,
In troth, an unco' way, sir.

Some on horse, and some on foot,
Comes hither many a score, sir :
Wha finds the way to Jeannie's heart,
Maun bring a coach and four, sir.

PAUL RICHARDSON.

AMATA.

Who has not known Amata,
And bowed him to her thrall,
The despot of the drawing-room,
The peerless of the ball?

Amata looked, and longed for
Three seasons now or so,
'Neath pertest hat the brightest face
At noontide in the Row?

She moves in graceful glory by,
She glistens through the dance,
The cynosure of every wish,
The aim of every glance,

In such a light of loveliness
As crushes to eclipse
The sheen of wreathèd *bandeaux*,
The swim of silken slips.

The proudest forms bend round her
In homage to her will;
Still she is woo'd Amata,
Unwon Amata still.

I wonder, in the dawning
When she is borne away,
And early sparrows chirp along
Her partner's homeward way,

When he checks the music-memories
To think of her between
The refrain of "Dinorah"
And the ripple of "Lurline,"—

I wonder if a conscience smite
That eligible swain,
How wild his least ambition were,
His lightest hope how vain!

For, if I read Amata right,
(I often think I do,)
The curling of her dainty lip,
The fair cheek's changeless hue;

The listless hand on proffered arm,
The guile of soft replies,
With restless face averted
To dazzle other eyes;

Ill is the augury I spell
Of feeling or of force
To train the tide of power and pride
In love's submissive course ;

And dim, and dark, and doubtful
Is figured to my view
That future friendship loves to trace,
Dear little girls, for you.

On, on in bright procession
The pretty votaries pass ;
I read the fate of years to come
In Fancy's magic glass.

On many a fold of soft brown hair
And pure unfretted brow
The matron's tiar rests as light
As girlhood's roses now.

Northward on some broad manor
Fair Edith's lot is set ;
At Stanhope Gate some fortunate
Has throned his sweet Annette ;

Lucy, whose bloom is rather full,
And Jane, who's far too pale,
Have flutter'd in the orange-wreath,
And trembled 'neath the veil ;

And bells peal high against the sky
O'er street and silent plain,
But I listen for thy wedding-chime,
Amata, all in vain.

Town lavishes its dusty charms,
And Cowes its freshening sea ;
Here Fashion spreads its parquets smooth,
Its white decks there for thee ;

And still before that costly shrine
Heart, hand, and hope are laid ;—
Unmelted still the haughty look,
The tender word unsaid !

Go, colder than the glacier,
And loftier than the Alps—
Go, treasuring the bleeding hearts,
As Indians treasure scalps !

With freedom all so loveable,
And flirting all so sweet,
And myriad vassals to subdue,
And myriad at thy feet,

There must be—conquest's current yet
So silverly flows on—
There must be ample time to yield,
And leisure to be won.—

Not so, if truth the poet years
In constant cadence sing,
That Autumn's fondest sunshine
Unfolds no buds of Spring.

He will not linger near us
Neglected and content,
The baby-boy from Paphos
With bow for ever bent.

We may not furl his pinion
To serve us at our will,
When all the happy lovelight pales
And all the soul grows chill.

Ah me, ah me ! a future
Is drear upon my glass !
I see the dimples deepening,
I see the bright bloom pass ;

See, one by one, how fickle youth
Suffers, and wakes, and thinks,
And breaks the rosy fetter,
And casts aside the links.

More laboured swells the toilette,
More studied gleams the smile,
Like moonlight on the tracery
Of some forsaken pile.

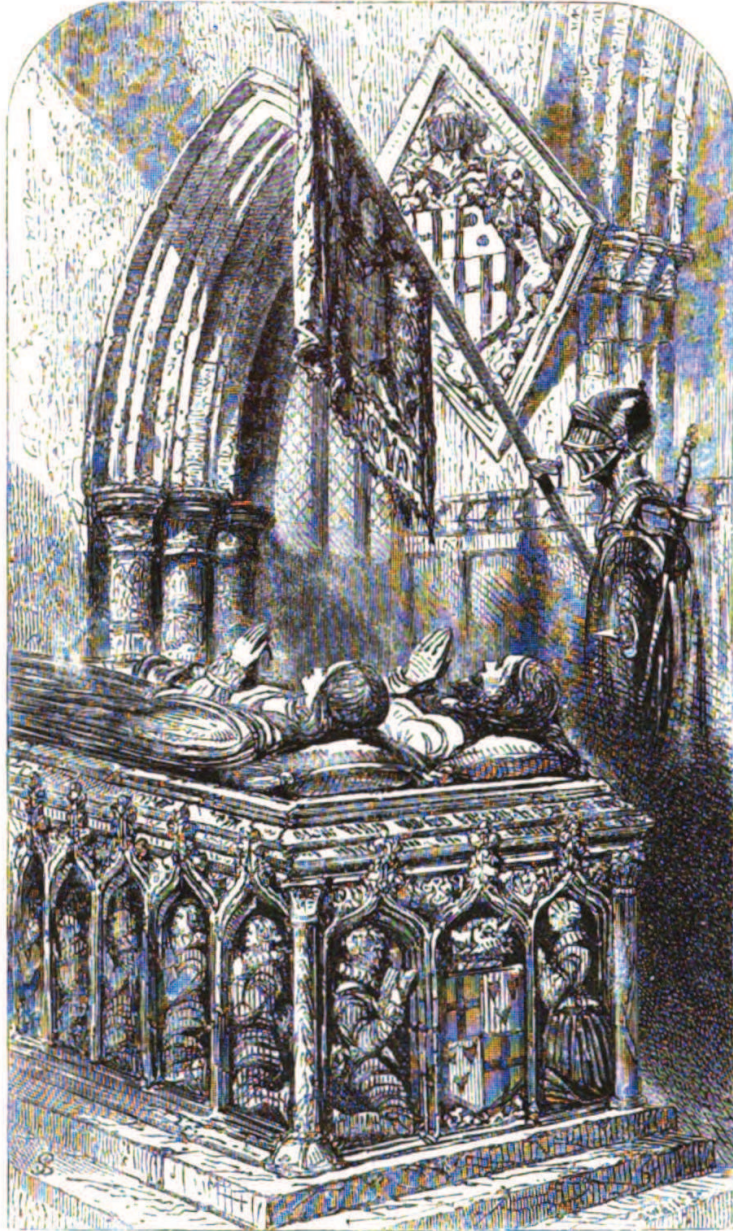
And comes the tide then freighted
With worship now no more ?
And is there mocking on the sea
At mourning on the shore ?

The supple knee has vanished,
The pleading voice is mute,
Unculled the flower of flattery,
Unstrung the lover's lute :

And desolate Amata,
Like some discrownèd queen,
Sits sorrowing for the empire lost,
And the glories that have been.

RALPH A. BENSON.

THE KNIGHT'S GRAVE.



I.

UNDER painted cross and chalice
In the flood of light,
Lies in marble, with Dame Alice,
Andrew Welldon, Knight;
Side by side, the legend sayeth,
These two lived and died,
And carved stone o'er mingled bone
Showeth them side by side.

II.

Nothing here, above or under,
Of fanatic gloom;
No fool's fear of death's deep wonder
Spoils their simple tomb:
Seems it that the sculptor graved it
Only for to show
What the Knight and what his Dame were
Now they are not so.

III.

Merry cheeps of madcap swallows
Reach them, darting by,
Changeful shadows from the sallows
On their white brows lie;

Changeful shadows from the sallows,
Constant from the limes;
For light friends go, if winds do
blow,
As in their ancient times.

IV.

Certes, lovely was the Lady!
Eyes, I guess, whose blue,
Calm, and cold, but gleaming
steady,
Tender was and true:
Of a noble presence surely,
Dutiful and staid,
Worthiness was glad before her,
Worthlessness afraid.

V.

Read beneath, in golden letters,
Proudly written down,
Names of all her "sonnes and
daughters,"
Each a matron crown:
Deftly cut in ruff and wimple
Kneeling figures show
Small heads over smaller rising,
In a solemn row.

VI.

These her triumphs. Sterner token
Chronicles her Lord:
Hangs above him, grim and broken,
Gilded helm and sword.
Sometimes, when with quire and
organ
All the still air swings,
Red with the rust and grey with the
dust,
Low rattles that blade, and rings.

VII.

Time was, Knight, that tiny treble
Should have stirred thy soul
More than drums and trumpets rebel
Braying health to Noll.

No more fight now!—nay, nor flight now!
The rest that thou hast given
In chancel shade to that good blade
God gives thy soul in heaven.

VIII.

Somewhere on this summer morning,
In this English isle,
Blossoms a cheek whose rich adorning
Herits, Dame, thy smile:
Some one in the realm whose fathers
Suffered much, and long,
Owes that sword and its good lord
Thanks for a righted wrong.

IX.

Therefore, for that maiden say I:
"Dame, God thee assoil;"
Therefore for that freeman pray I:
"Knight, God quit thy toil;"
And for all Christian men and me
Grace from the gracious Lord
To write our name with no more shame,
And sheathe as clean a sword.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

NOW, AND THEN.

BIRDS are singing on bush and tree,
Singing a thousand loves and joys ;
Once, it was music sweet to me,
Now, it seemeth only noise.

Ah ! life's music fled with him !

Roses are blooming—once they were
Fairest of wonders that Nature weaves ;
Now their perfume makes faint the air,

And, to me, they are just—red leaves.
Ah ! life's beauty faded with him !

Daylight dies, and the stars arise,
Not as of old with hope-giving light ;
Then, they looked loving, like human eyes,
Now, they are pitiless, cold, and bright.

Ah ! the brightest star has set !

ANNA HAGEDON.

NON SATIS.



'Tis not enough to see thee, like a star
That rises on our sight when eve is clear,
Which all may view—but all must view afar.
'Tis not enough to watch thee, as the moon
Gazes on earth with steadfast face, but ne'er
May voice with voice exchange and intertune.

'Tis not enough to meet thee as by chance
In lighted rooms, and feign a cold repose,—
Whereas I tremble to thy slightest glance.
'Tis not enough to cross thee in the glare
Of day, when serried friends thy path inclose,—
Content the sunlight of thy smile to share.

No ! I am jealous of all senseless things
That near and touch thee—of the fluttering wind
That dallies round with fond, familiar wings,
And dares to kiss thine eyes and lift the tress
From thy blue temple ;—of the jewel blind
Upon thy bosom pillow'd, passionless.

And I could rend the flower that thou dost pluck,
And drink its odour with thy nostrils fine,
And taste its honey which the bee did suck.
Oh ! I could kil thy sleek caressing hound
That feels thy hand, and blameless may entwine
Thy feet, whene'er he choose to bound.

For I would have thee, as the miser hoards
His idol gold, lock'd close with ponderous key,
In chest of brazen bands round ebon boards.
I could not rest until with sails unfurl'd
I bore my treasure o'er the secret sea,
To some oasis of the desert world.

Because I want thee ALL ;—and nothing less
Than thy *whole being* would my heart suffice,—
Thee and thy love entire I must possess.
No jot withheld,—no atom of thy love
Passing the sphere of adamant ice,
Within whose vault we must in oneness move.
BERNI.

A start—a pause—a flutter and a sigh,
A voice that trembles in the common greeting ;
The hurried clasp of an unready hand,
That once was frankly offered at your meeting.

I saw you, little Annie—yes, I know,
He's Charlie's friend, just landed from Bengal,
He's very fond of Charlie, ah ! and so
He stay'd till last at Charlie's sister's ball.

You danced eight times together—am I right
“He's such a perfect waltzer”—nothing more ?
You met a week ago this very night,
And I have—known you all your lifetime o'er !

Forgive me that I played the list'ner, dear,
And heard him win your love, amongst your flowers ;

You had forgotten I was prisoned here,
A poor lone cripple all these festive hours.

He's very winsome, honest-eyed, and tall,
The cross for valour's roll contains his story.
On my pain-stricken brow no wreath will fall,
I reap in Life's grim battle all but glory.

Dearie, don't kneel, and hide those kind grey eyes,
I am not grieving, look me in the face.
Why, who am I, that I should claim the prize,
Who never could have started in the race ?

He's waiting for you, Annie—leave me now
Alone with what must be a happy past.
A brother's kiss I claim upon your brow,
God bless you, Annie, 'tis my first—and last.

A. F.

TEMUJIN.

THE Imperial mandate to Pekin
Hath summoned every Tartar lord ;
The highest place to Temujin,
Who hath only fifteen summers seen,
The Tartars yield with one accord.

“ Whence doth this froward youth derive,
His title to this high degree,
We deemed it our prerogative,
Precedence, honours, rank to give :
Who is the youth—whence cometh he ? ”

“ For valour, skill, and enterprise,
This Mongol boy is more than man ;
The foremost e'er where danger lies,
Amid your routed enemies,—
The Tartar nation hailed him Khan.”

“ So young, yet held in such esteem,
He quarries at high game, forsooth !
His years such honours ill-beseem:
Dissolve we his ambitious dream,
This very night arrest the youth.”

In the Durbar with studied phrase
Of deep duplicity and guile,
The Emperor bids his peers give place
To the brave youth of Mongol race,
And greets him with most winning smile.

The court dismiss'd, the youth retires,
His tents are pitch'd beyond the walls ;
No confidence that smile inspires—
The flattery suspicion fires :
To council all his friends he calls.

“ This is no place for Temujin,—
Saddle my horse, I must away ;
To-night I sleep not in Pekin,
For as I read the hearts of men,
That king smiles on me to betray.”

“ Escaped ! Shall we be baffled thus,
And by a beardless Mongol boy ?
Leaves he the court unbid by us—
It is a treason dangerous ;
The snake while young we must destroy.”

Proclaim'd a rebel with a price
Set on his head, young Temujin
For life across the desert flies.
Far in the west Mongolia lies ;
Long is the road to Kra-Kooren.

A maiden at a cottage door
Sits plying hard her spinning-wheel ;
Weak, weary, press'd by hunger sore,
A youth appears the maid before,
And asks the modest boon—a meal.

With ready hospitality
The maiden shares her humble store,
Prepares the mess of Tsamba tea,
Which while he swallows greedily,
A bed she spreads upon the floor.

“Now, rest,” she saith, “and I will sit
And watch that danger come not near ;
Thou hast not travell’d with such heat,
But for a cause,—I ask not it :
A brother thou while resting here.”

She quits her spinning-wheel and flies
To mount the watch-tower’s signal mast ;
There scans th’ horizon with keen eyes,
Till in the distant mist she spies
A band of horsemen riding fast.

She hurries back to warn her guest,
Waking him up from heavy sleep :
“If danger thou imaginest,
Under my cotton creep and rest,—
In yon dark corner lies the heap.”

The strangers come : “Say, maiden, say,
We seek the rebel Temujin,
His horse we found not far away,
A carcase of wild wolves the prey :
Hast thou the Mongol traitor seen ?



“A price is set upon his head,
Who shelter give his fate will share ;
Show us the youth, alive or dead,
And for thyself when thou shalt wed,
A princely dower we can spare.”

“Here at my door I sit and spin,
As simple Tartar maid should do,
I know not rebels from true men,
And never heard of Temujin,
Whom thus ye cruelly pursue.”

“Simple she seemeth, but acute,
This youth she never would betray :
Dismount, my men, and search the hut ;
Words we should waste to little fruit,—
Simple were we to trust her say.”

Two spearmen from their saddles leap,
And rudely rush the hut inside.
Ah ! will they search that cotton-heap,
God grant my weary guest escape !—
The thought and feeling she must hide.

"Ye do me justice, sirs," saith she,
"Nor young nor old would I betray;
And yet it is small courtesy
To search the house of maid like me :
Ye merit not to find your prey."

The searchers from the cottage door
Appear alone—their search was vain :
"Adieu, we trouble thee no more.
Mount ! men, the country round explore !"
And off they scour across the plain.

"Now, rouse thee, Temujin ! and tell
Why follow these thy trace so hot ?
Ah ! there is blood !—all is not well ;
Say, honour'd guest, how this befel,
And yet the searchers found thee not."

"I am indeed proscribed, proclaim'd,
The persecuted Temujin ;
But be not of thy guest ashamed,
A rebel only because named
Great Khan, unlicensed from Pekin.

"These men pursue from avarice,
For greed of gold their search is keen ;
Here nothing 'scaped their prying eyes,
They probed your cotton—pierced me twice, —
Still lay I motionless unseen.

"The wounds are slight and need no care ;
But had they pierced my very breast,
Death I had taken from their spear,
And ne'er betray'd that I was here,
Lest thou had suffer'd for thy guest."

"Ah ! hath thy spirit such control
O'er nature's impulse under pain ?
Then wert thou born mankind to rule,
And hast indeed the noble soul
That Tartars look for in their Khan.

"But rest thee now till close of day,
Thy fortunes I have made my own ;
This night my father's trusty grey
Shall speed thee onward on thy way :
But 'tis not fit thou go alone.

"Myself will be the trusty guide,
To lead thee by the surest path ;
Nor will I quit thy honour'd side
Till safe where Mongol friends abide
Thou mayst defy the tyrant's wrath.

"Then, as thou wilt, or send me back
To sit and spin in this my home,
Or let me follow in thy track,
And with thy Mongol kin partake
Thy glorious destiny to come."

"Nay, maiden, I accept not so,
The proffer of thy service tried ;
Already life to thee I owe:
If thou'rt content with me to go,
Thou goest as my destined bride."

The hosts of China gather'd are,
The emperor is at their head ;
For freedom fights the brave Tartar,
Roused to resistance and to war,
By Temujin to battle led.

Conquest on his young banner waits,
Bright opens on him glory's dawn ;
From China to the Caspian gates,
The proudest kings and greatest states,
Yield to the mighty Jungeez Khan.

And she, the desert-given bride,
Who in the weary fugitive
The germ of this career descried,
Bravely she sits her lord beside,
And glories in her place of pride ;—
Long shall her fame in story live.

HP.

THE TWO HANDS.

A LARGE brown hand by labour stained
Four snowy fingers prest,
As though a swarthy Cyclops strained
A white maid to his breast.

And fondly did that brown hand hold
Those fingers white as snow,
As though it were a link of gold
That would not let them go.

Time passes on. The two hands clasp
Another newly given :
As though they'd found an angel's grasp
To draw them up to heaven.

Once more the brown hand and the white
Are linked. So cold ! so fast !—
As though true loving hearts unite
More closely at the last. MARK LEMON.

"HIS HAND UPON THE LATCH."

A YOUNG WIFE'S SONG.



My cottage home is fill'd with light
The long, long summer day,
But, ah ! I dearer love the night,
And hail the sinking ray.
For eve restores me one whose smile
Doth more than morning's match,—
And life afresh seems dawning while
His hand is on the latch !

When autumn fields are thick with sheaves,
And shadows earlier fall,
And grapes grow purple 'neath the eaves
Along our trellis'd wall,—
I dreaming sit,—the sleepy bird
Faint twittering in the thatch,—
To wake to joy when soft is heard
His hand upon the latch !

In the short winter afternoon
I throw my work aside,
And through the lattice, whilst the moon
Shines mistily and wide,
On the dim upland paths I peer
In vain his form to catch,—
I startle with delight, and hear
His hand upon the latch !

Yes ; I am his in storm and shine ;
For me he toils all day ;
And his true heart I know is mine,
Both near me and away.
And when he leaves our garden gate
At morn, his steps I watch,—
Then patiently till eve await
His hand upon the latch !

BERN.

SONNET FROM PETRARCH.

“ *Se lamentar angelli o verdi fronde.* ”

THE birds' sad song, the young leaves' rustling play,
In the soft summer air, the hoarser sounds
Of lucid waters as they rush away

Between their verdant flower-enameled bounds,
Where, lost in Love's sweet phantasies, I lie ;

All these—the murmur of bird, leaf, and stream,
Are filled with *her*. To my fond ear and eye

Her voice, her living form, still present seem ;
And to my passionate sorrow she replies

In pitying accents from the far-off shore—
“ Why dost thou shed such tears from those sad eyes ?
Untimely wasting ! Weep for me no more.
I died to live ; and when life seemed to close,
The dawn of God's eternal day arose.”

W.

FAIR AND FALSE.



THERE was a tender beauty in her face,
 A smile like magic,
 A mystic light within her soft dark eyes,
 Half gay—half tragic;
 As if the better angel of her life
 At times were grieving,
 To find that one so fair and young could be
 Ever deceiving.

For, shame to tell! she trifled with *two* hearts,
 With both coquetting,
 And so *I* tore her image from my breast,
 My love forgetting.
 Yet blame not *all* because deceit lay shrined
 In heart so youthful;
 For *one* false woman, trust me, you will find
 TEN THOUSAND truthful! B. S. MONTGOMERY.



THE LEGEND OF THE REDBREAST.

“THERE is a little bird, mamma,
Upon our holly-tree.
And with his twinkling great black eye
He looks so shy at me.

“I love that little bird, mamma,
So gentle and so still,
To see him pluck the berries bright,
Between his slender bill.

“That he is God's ‘own bird,’ mamma,
You very oft have said :
Why is his little eye so bright,
His little breast so red ?”

“It is a pretty tale, my child,
Come stand beside my knee,
And I will tell my little Kate
Red Robin's history.

“When Jesus for my little girl
And all his children died,
By wicked men unto the cross,
Nailed fast and crucified ;

“There came a gentle little bird,
Who, with his efforts weak,
Pluck'd one from out the ‘crown of thorns’
Within his tiny beak.

“And as he pull'd, the crimson stream,
The holiest and the best,
Flowing from where the thorn had been,
Stain'd Robin's downy breast :

“So ever when the snow comes round
To end the wintry year,
Perch'd high upon the holly-bough
The Redbreast warbles clear.

“No other songster on the spray
At Christmas time is heard ;
But when the Saviour's birth we keep
We hear ‘The Saviour's bird.’ ”

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.